648 726 on the settlements of Sonora. Many expeditions, fitted out at great expense, were sent against them, but in that barren land, destitute of water, the military parties suffered greatly in their campaigns, and succeeded little in their efforts to conquer the wary natives.

177 648 By 1850 probably every Seri between infancy and decrepitude had seen the proprietor and other inhabitants of the rancho of Don Pascual Encinas at Costa Rica where the Seris were abnormally tolerated and even encouraged to make themselves useful and unobjectionable. They yielded to indolent scavengering more than ever before; they substituted cast-off rags and barter-bought cotton cloth for their pelican robes and other primitive garments. They ate cooked food when it fell their way; half heartedly they adopted metal cutting implements and sought or stole nails and hoop-iron for arrow points. [191] Some acquired a smattering of Spanish and many came to sport Spanish names. Never, however, did more than one or two Seris come to live in a house, nor even to encompass the idea of making adobe. They had not learned to ride horses nor to burden them, but only to use them for immediate slaughter and consumption. They were acquainted with firearms, but it was not until years later that they learned to use them. In and about Rancho Costa Rica the Seris and the Mexicans lived for a time in mutual tolerance, certain depredations being allowed the Indians just as were the rodents of the rancheria.

648 721 When, in 1855, Don Pascual Encinas experienced the loss of unusually large numbers of stock from Seri raids, he was aroused into announcing that a Seri head would be taken for each head of stock stolen. For a while the Indians seemed to acquiesce, but within a few days a group of Seri women "milled" a band of horses, caught and threw one so that its neck was broken, whereupon they immediately sucked its blood, gorged on [252] its intestines, and buried its quarters to "ripen" according to their custom. The vaqueros of the settlement were instructed to shoot the first Seri seen on the llano. Within two days the tribe was on the warpath and the war raged for a decade.

[p.262(B)]

BAND V

642 These people were apparently hunters, gatherers, and fishermen. It is said that they speared fish from the shore since they did not use *balsas*. They too apparently raided the ranches. Their warring nature has already been discussed; it resulted in the acquisition of few friends. However, several marriages between members of this band and members of subdivision 2 of Band III are said to have occurred.

BAND VI

The members of Band VI lived on San Esteban Island and were the most primitive of the tribe. They lived in huts made of driftwood and in caves and made extensive use of the *balsa*. Although they did not have the bow and arrow, they did become expert in the use of the spear. The people depended mainly on a seafood, iguana, and maguey diet.

Perhaps it was due to the confined living space on the small island with the accompanying lack of fresh water that relations between the four subdivisions were precarious and fights broke out frequently. The Seri today stress the fact that the members of this band were impetuous and unpredictable.

Their relations with the other bands were generally good however. Seri from Band III were free to visit San Esteban where they were well treated.

The San Esteban people seldom traveled to the mainland, and, since they spoke no Spanish, it is probable that they made no peaceful contact with non-Seri groups.

COLLAPSE OF THE BAND SYSTEM

Internal strife in the Seri tribe was probably a major factor in the establishment of the band system. External strife was a major factor in its downfall.

Reference has been made to the plundering, killings and rustling of cattle to which certain of the bands were dedicated. The concern of the Sonora government was aroused, and steps were taken to crush the rebellious groups. According to the present-day Seri, military action by army units and rancher outfits against the various bands resulted in the near-destruction of the whole tribe.[11]